

BUDGET CUTS RESULT IN INNOVATIVE JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN First Annual Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Denver, CO) Monday, August 2. **The First Annual Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute** will be held at the **University of Denver** from **August 1st through August 4th, 2010**. When budget cuts forced the **Colorado Supreme Court, Court Improvement Program** to cancel its annual conference, **Family Law Program Manager, Bill DeLisio**, reached out to the **Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center**, a local nonprofit that specializes in legal advocacy for abused and neglected children. The result is a new way of educating judges.

The Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center, **University of Denver Sturm College of Law** and the Court Improvement Program have partnered to educate and train judges and magistrates presiding over child abuse and neglect or dependency cases. The University of Denver will, literally, host the **22 Judges and Magistrates from all over Colorado** as many will stay in vacant dorm rooms for the four day conference.

The First Annual Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute is intended to be an interactive training following the progression of a dependency case beginning with the first contact with a judge. The **Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center** developed a case curriculum for a mock trial of a child's abuse and neglect case to give judicial officials the opportunity to share their bench experiences and practice. **"This one of a kind interactive training will provide a good forum to discuss the impact of courtroom practices in the lives of the kids we represent. Elements that they don't always see."** said **Jason Carrithers, Esq.**, a Senior Attorney at the **Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center** who also trains University of Denver Sturm College of Law students through the Child Advocacy Practicum.

Participants in the mock trial include **Judge Lowenbach, Judge Delgado, Magistrate Allen, Magistrate McLean, Jason Carrithers, Esq.**, (Senior Attorney, Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center), **Jeff Koy, Esq.** (Director of Litigation, Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center), **Dea Schantz** (Boulder County Dependency Attorney), **Carolyn Pelloux** (Respondent Parent Counsel), **Missy Berglund** (Arapahoe County Caseworker).

The [Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center](http://www.rmclawcenter.org) is a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit agency that protects and saves the lives of abused and neglected children through zealous legal advocacy, innovative programs and public policy reform. Each year, the Children's Law Center represents more than 500 maltreated children and trains private attorneys who donate nearly one million dollars in volunteer legal services to at-risk families, child victims of domestic violence, and foster parents.

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